

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claims 10-13 and 15-18 are cancelled.

Turning to the Official Action, claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 USC 102 as anticipated by EP 0 601 799. This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed as applied to the claims after the foregoing amendments.

The cited reference does not teach or suggest the process of the present invention according to claims 1-9 and 14.

Although this reference discloses a conventional ring opening polymerization, it is known that a polymer having a terminal free carboxylic acid cannot be formed by such a conventional ring opening polymerization. Such a conventional ring opening polymerization does not teach or suggest the process of the present invention. Therefore, claims 1-9 and 14 are patentable over this reference.

Claims 1-13 are also rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by EP 1 197 208. This ground of rejection is also respectfully traversed as applied to the pending claims.

The cited reference has a publication dated of April 17, 2002, and claims priority upon the Japanese application having a filing date of July 15, 1999.

On the other hand, the present application claims priority upon an international application filed December 14, 1999, which claims priority upon a Japanese application filed December 15, 1998.

There is submitted concurrently herewith a verified English translation of the Japanese priority application upon which the present application claims the benefit, JP 356497/1998. A review of the English translation reflects that the pending claims are fully supported by the priority application.

Accordingly, under the provisions of 35 USC 119, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is entitled to the benefit of the filing date of the priority application. As a

result of the priority benefit, the cited reference is no longer prior art against the present application. Thus, this ground of rejection is deemed to be overcome.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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